

**STATE AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER FITTER  
APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

October 28, 2014  
UA Local 183 Training Center, Pewaukee, WI

**DRAFT MINUTES**

| <b>Members Present</b>   | <b>Organization</b>          |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Cannon, Robert           | Sprinkler Fitters Local 669  |
| Carlson, Sherry          | Design Build Fire Protection |
| Driebel, Dan             | Sprinkler Fitters Local 669  |
| Gall, Corey (Co-Chair)   | Sprinkler Fitters Local 183  |
| Hext, Rick               | Ahern Fire Protection        |
| Radke, Eric              | Gruneau Fire Protection      |
| Klug, Kevin              | Dave Jones Inc.              |
| Sferra, Steve (Co-Chair) | United Fire Protection       |

| <b>Members Absent</b> | <b>Organization</b>         |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Beil, Michael         | Sprinkler Fitters Local 183 |
| Hintz, Greg           | K. Kranski & Sons, Inc.     |
| Kraft, Ron            | Sprinkler Fitters Local 183 |

| <b>Consultants &amp; Guests</b> | <b>Organization</b>                |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Emrick, Leigh                   | Associated Builders & Contractors  |
| Morgan, Karen                   | Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards |
| Smith, Owen                     | Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards |

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1. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Steve Sferra, Committee Co-chair, in conformity with Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.
  2. A sign-in sheet was circulated to record those in attendance.
  3. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

#### **4. Old Business**

##### **a. Review the roster.**

Owen Smith distributed the current roster and asked the committee to review its composition and contact information. The committee welcomed a new Employer member, Kevin Klug from Dave Jones Inc. Several members stated they will serve another three-year term once their current term expires at the end of the calendar year.

**Action:** *BAS will update the roster.*

##### **b. Review the follow-up items from the previous meeting.**

###### **i. For action: introduction to health and wellness in the State Standards**

Owen reviewed that the state committee had preferred to require apprentices to engage in health and wellness activities, such as stretching. He discussed the various options for the provision: the state standards; local optional work processes; or special provisions.

The topic led to a general discussion of whether selection procedures for pre-apprenticeship programs should be inserted into the state standards. The committee agreed such programs are outside of its scope and more appropriate for local committees.

###### **ii. Shared revenue programs.**

The Bureau reported that it did not find information on shared revenue programs, or programs in which high schools provide financial awards to students for attending college. Owen did note, though, that the financial aid and financial awards between educational institutions or between an educational institution and an individual can be applied to paid related instruction, but are arrangements made outside the scope of registered apprenticeship.

###### **iii. Participant statistics from Local 669.**

The committee revisited the discussion on whether data from Local 669 is necessary and, if so, how the data should be used in relationship with the Bureau's data. At the last meeting, the committee requested that the Bureau receive Local 669's data and combine it with its own data into a separate historical and quarterly report. Owen state that that would be labor intensive up front, but he would do it, at the committee's request. However, the effort would depend on Local 669 providing ten years of data for the basis of a historical report and consistently providing quarterly data for the participant report.

**Action:** *the state committee agreed that it prefers combined data; Local 669 agreed to provide the necessary data; and the Bureau agreed to provide combined reports.*

##### **c. Apprenticeship Completion Award Program**

Rather than reviewing the program background and progress, Owen first asked the committee for its feedback on its familiarity with ACAP and its experience requesting reimbursement. He noted that the information would help the Bureau gauge the effectiveness of its informational mass mailings and website. The committee agreed that it was familiar with the program, its purpose, and its reimbursement processes. JAC apprentices pay tuition to Milwaukee Area Technical College and the

education fund pays for the apprentice's books. The committees chose not to request reimbursement for its or the trust's expenses in order to maximize the reimbursement for the apprentice.

**d. Veterans in Piping Program**

Corey Gall reported that a participant in the Veterans in Piping program is now working as a sprinkler fitter apprentice. He completed the first phase of the VIP Program (class room), bypassed the second (on-the-job training), and was hired directly as a registered apprentice, which is allowed in the collective bargaining agreement.

Members encouraged the Bureau not to tell participants to quit their jobs because they are guaranteed employment through the program, which was rumored; and recommended that participants be required to take the Accuplacer before the program begins or outside of the classroom portion. Last, the committee recommended that the Bureau make the paperwork easier or provide more technical assistance, because several students were still completing paperwork during the training.

Despite the administrative hiccups, the local committees and the state committee believe the program is positive and working well. Veterans on the whole have done very well in the apprenticeship program, so a veteran with preparatory training in the trade is even more attractive and interesting to contractors.

**e. Other**

No additional topics were brought forward.

**5. New Business**

**a. BAS Personnel Update**

Owen reported that the Bureau projects it will hire apprenticeship training representatives for the Madison and Waukesha areas by December 1.

**b. For action: proposed revisions to the state Exhibit A.**

Owen reiterated how critical the committee's work is in maintaining the state Exhibit A. The document sets forth the minimum training standards and literally becomes the template for apprenticeship contracts across the state. For these reasons, the Bureau is reviewing all state Exhibit A's to ensure the language is clear and legal.

A general discussion followed on the advantages and disadvantages of each option. The committee agreed that "inserting language" into the Special Provisions section of the apprentice contract would be the most appropriate, because the section outlines specific training or requirements outside of the scope of on-the-job training. The committee drafted appropriate language.

In addition, Owen proposed minor revisions to the current content of Special Provisions for clarity.

**Action:** *The committee approved a motion to accept all proposed revisions.*

### **c. American Apprenticeship Grants**

This year the U.S. Department of Labor is projected to make applications available for \$100m in American Apprenticeship Grants. The competitive grants will be awarded to partnerships that

- launch apprenticeship models in new fields, such as advanced manufacturing and health care;
- align apprenticeships to career pathways by rewarding workplace learning with college credit or linking to pre-apprenticeship programs;
- and scale apprenticeship models that work by marketing the value of apprenticeship, or building national and regional partnerships to expand apprenticeships

The maximum grant award is \$6m.

To prepare for the grant application, the Bureau convened two industry focus group: one for the construction sector, one from the manufacturing sector. This strategy of engaging industry early proved excellent for the SAGE grant: by identifying numerous potential ways in which grant money could upgrade apprenticeship programs, the Bureau was able to submit a more robust grant application, more quickly.

Although the specific requirements of the American Apprenticeship Grants are yet to be announced, the industry focus groups convened by the Bureau identified these potential uses:

- increase the apprenticeship "pipeline" by promoting and developing pre-apprenticeship programs, apprenticeship prep programs and linkages between youth and registered apprenticeship, including transcribed credit
- develop outreach materials and events targeted at parents and educators to improve the perception of skilled trades as viable, valid professions.
- develop mentoring programs for skilled workers, possibly by increasing the availability of transition to trainer courses

A general discussion followed. Members agreed that the priority should be creating pipelines into apprenticeship, and argued that the parents, not the students, often harbor misconceptions about careers in the trades.

### **d. Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council: WI Career Pathway Subcommittee**

Owen Smith reported that apprenticeship continues to receive national attention due to a "perfect storm" of factors, and the attention has directly influenced the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council to implement significant new efforts.

Nationally, economists predict an unprecedented shortage of workers in the next five to ten years, due to the progressive retirement of the baby boomer generation and concurrent lack of young adult workers to replace them. In addition, more countries, sectors and industries are expressing interest in apprenticeship training. Last, these changes necessitate creating and expanding pipeline programs into apprenticeship, especially by offering credentials or advanced credit.

To keep abreast of national developments and position the state programs to respond effectively, the Advisory Council approved the creation of the Wisconsin Career Pathway Advisory Subcommittee. The new subcommittee will oversee the development of bridges between youth apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship programs, and will be co-led by representatives of both staffs.

The strategy will be to introduce youth to certain trades and skills through youth apprenticeship, and award them credit towards a related registered apprenticeship, in which they would learn the trade in its entirety. Linking the programs through credit is feasible because both programs utilize competency checklists.

A pilot effort to link the two programs through credit has proven successful in manufacturing.

Owen noted that youth apprenticeship is pertinent because the Architecture and Construction youth apprenticeship program is now active. Members noted that the program was strongly supported by Associated General Contractors.

A general discussion followed. Members echoed their support of creating pipelines into apprenticeship, particularly because 18% of college graduates do not graduate and more graduate only to experience difficulty getting a job. However, the committee expressed caution over safety and liability issues for high school students on a job site. Attendees agreed that the safest location for a youth apprentice would be the shop.

**Action:** *the committee approved a motion to invite the DWD Youth Apprenticeship staff to their 2015 spring meeting to discuss the Architecture & Construction youth apprenticeship program.*

**6. WTCS Update**

No items were brought forth.

**7. Review the program participants.**

The Bureau statistical report included 49 apprentices and 16 with contracts in active or unassigned status on October 17, 2014.

8. The next meeting was not chosen. The committee preferred the weeks of May 11 and May 18, but needed more time to research. The Bureau will survey the committee in the spring.
9. The committee adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

**Follow-up Items**

- i. BAS will update the Exhibit A.
- ii. Local 669 will provide historical and current data. The Bureau will incorporate the data with its own.
- iii. BAS will invite DWD YA to the 2015 spring meeting.

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*Submitted by Owen Smith, Program Analyst.*